

2650054

Registered provider: Courtyard Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a large private provider. It is registered to provide care for up to six children with learning disabilities. The statement of purpose says the aim of the home is to provide a safe, warm and nurturing environment.

The home has had three managers in the last year, none of whom have registered with Ofsted. Since the last inspection, the manager has resigned. A senior manager is overseeing the day-to-day management of the home, and they were present during this visit.

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 February 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
---	-------------

How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
---	------

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
---	------

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 16 November 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

Compliance notices were served at the last inspection. These were in relation to regulation 12, the protection of children standard and regulation 13, the leadership and management standard. The compliance notices were found to be met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/11/2022	Full	Inadequate
16/11/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are happy. They seem relaxed around staff, who know them well. Staff form warm and nurturing relationships with children. They communicate with children effectively. Children have become less frustrated because staff have a good understanding of how they communicate. An independent reviewing officer said of one of the children, 'His behaviour around the home is noted to be calmer, and this is viewed to be supported by his development in communicating his needs, wants and feelings.'

Children make significant progress with their communication, life skills and relationships. For example, a child who was unable to communicate verbally when he first came to the home can now communicate verbally. Another child has made significant developments with their personal hygiene.

Children enjoy a range of activities that they choose using pictures. During the inspection, children chose to go to a country park and have lunch in a favourite restaurant. On the day, some children changed their mind and wanted to go to the cinema instead. Staff were flexible and accommodated the change. Staff were careful to ensure the safety of the children from leaving the home until they returned. Children have also enjoyed other activities, such as swimming, go-karting and walks as well as making the most of a large garden that is full of play equipment.

The environment is starting to look more homely. Significant improvements have been made, and more sensory resources have been purchased. This means that children have a more homely and stimulating environment.

Staff understand how important family members are to children. They facilitate time with families. An independent reviewing officer said, 'The home has done a sterling job in promoting sibling family time and nurturing the child's relationship with his sister. He thoroughly enjoys his visits to his sister, and the home have worked to build positive relationships with his sister's foster carers.'

Staff respond quickly to children who are feeling unwell. For example, a child was supported to go and see a pharmacist when a doctor's appointment was not available that day. This ensured that the child received the medication they required, and the condition cleared up quickly. Children are also encouraged to eat healthily and exercise to maintain good health.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Staff know how to keep children safe. They also help children to understand how to keep themselves safe. Children have secure relationships with staff.

Children's behaviour is mostly good. Incidents occur infrequently. Staff support children to communicate why they are feeling anxious, and they use techniques that are individual to the child to enable them to feel less anxious. Consequently, staff have not used physical intervention with children since the last inspection. A social worker said of one child, 'His episodes of dysregulation are much less, and when they occur, he is supported by staff to manage these times, and they are very short in length.' This child finds it helpful to go to his room with a member of staff, who supports him to do his breathing exercises. This helps the child to become calmer again.

Some children harm themselves by biting their hands or banging their head. Staff use good strategies to support these children when they are upset. For example, ear defenders are kept nearby for children who struggle with loud noises. Staff know when children are starting to struggle and offer the ear defenders or ask them if they want to move to a quieter area. This often prevents the child from becoming more anxious and harming themselves.

A new behaviour of concern that has occurred on one occasion only has not been added to the child's risk assessment. This would ensure that staff know what to do should the behaviour occur again. Furthermore, staff do not reflect on incidents they have been involved in. This is a missed opportunity to learn from incidents, which would therefore prevent future incidents.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager post is currently vacant. However, a new manager has been appointed and is due to start imminently. The home has been managed by a regional director, who has previously been a registered manager at the home. The temporary manager has made significant changes to the home in a short space of time. She has supported staff to ensure a more consistent approach towards the well-being and safety of children.

Good monitoring systems are beginning to take effect. The new electronic system is gradually becoming embedded into practice, but this is taking time. This has impacted on how some records have been completed. Therefore, some records have not been robustly completed or reviewed, such as incident records and records of marks and bruises. For example, some records do not clearly provide an explanation for a mark. These explanations can be found in other records, but it would be better to have the explanation on the appropriate form so that information about a mark or bruise is all in one place.

Some staff have left since the last inspection. These vacancies are being filled. Agency staff are used, but they are used regularly, and they therefore know the children. Most staff have worked in the home for a long time. Most are either appropriately qualified or are completing the appropriate qualification. Staff feel very well supported by each other and the management team. They receive regular formal supervision that helps them to reflect and improve on their practice.

Most external professionals are happy with the care that children receive. They say that staff communicate effectively with them, which helps to promote consistent and effective care.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. When there are new behaviours of concern for a child, their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day-to-day basis. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring (including under regulations 44 and 45) to ensure continuous improvement. They should review incidents and be responsible for proactively implementing lessons learned and sustaining good practice. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, using the social care common inspection framework. This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2650054

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Courtyard Care Limited

Registered provider address: 3 Siskin Drive, Middlemarch Business Park,
Coventry, West Midlands CV3 4FJ

Responsible individual: Gary Thompson

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Joanne Vyas, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023